THE

Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival of Religion in *England Scotland* and *America*.

Saturday DECEMBER 3. 1743. § N°. 40.

Mr. Robe's *Narrative continued.*

THO' *some old* People have been awakened, yet this Work is *most noticeable* among the *younger* Sort: And some *very young* (within *twelve Years* of Age) have been obſervably wrought upon, and the Fruits are very agreable; amongſt others their Delight in Prayer, and their frequent meeting together for that End. And they who have noticed them, have informed me of their ſpeaking in Prayer, the wonderful Things of GOD.--- As the LORD has been pleaſed obſervably to own us in the publick Ordinances, and to make us ſee his Goings in the Sanctuary; ſo, I think no leſs have we felt a *down-pouring* of his SPIRIT, upon the Occaſion of our Evening-Exerciſes upon *Sabbath Nights*. For immediately after publick Worſhip is over, ſuch Crouds of People come to the *Manſe*, as fill the Houſe, and the Cloſe before the Doors; diſcovering a great thirſt after the Word, and ſuch an unuſual Concern in hearing it, that their mourning Cries frequently drown my Voice, ſo that I am obliged, frequently to ſtop, till they compoſe themſelves. And many on theſe Occaſions fall under deep and abiding Convictions: So that I'm taken up in dealing with them for ſome Hours after the Meeting is diſmiſs'd.--- *Many have give ſuch Evidences of a ſaving real Work of the* SPIRIT, *that to call it into Queſtion, would put old experienced Chriſtians to doubt of their own State, yea, to call in Queſtion the Experiences of the Saints recorded in Scripture.* And yet there are here, as well as elſewhere, who are *contradicting and blaſpheming*; they are Objects of Pity, and ought to be prayed for.--- I give you this Account of the LORD's Work in this Pariſh for your own private Satisfaction, and of thoſe with you who may join

with us, in Prayer and Praiſes, to our gracious GOD, who has done ſuch great Things for us.---- We are mindful of you and your Congregation, and of the Work of GOD in other Parts, not only in publick and in private, but in our praying Societies; ſeveral whereof have been of late erected in this Pariſh, and many People flocking to them. We expect the like from you and your People.--- That the LORD may carry on his Work with you and us, and other Parts of the Land; and that he may ſignally countenance that ſolemn Occaſion you have in View *next Lord's Day* is the earneſt Deſire and Prayer of *Rev. and dear Brother*

Your affectionate Brother and

Muthil Sept. 28. 1742. *Servant in our deareſt Lord,*

William Hally.

I received, upon the 29th of *October*, a Letter from the *ſame worthy Brother*, giving a further Account of the Progreſs of the good Work at *Muthil*, and of ſeveral other Particulars, the Knowledge whereof, I judge, will be agreable to many. It is as followeth,

Rev. and dear Brother,

Your's of the 17th *Inſtant*, I received upon the 20th---- By which I was exceedingly refreſhed, with the Account of the Continuance, and Progreſs of the LORD's Work in that Part of his Vineyard whereof you have the paſtoral Charge. ---TheſeThings brought about with you here, and elſewhere, are the *Doings* of the LORD, and wonderful in our Eyes: and conſidering, the almoſt univerſal deadneſs, degeneracy, deſpiſing of Goſpel Ordinances, ſlighting the Ambaſſadors of CHRIST, and the many other crying Abominations in the Land; this reviving, this ſurpriſing Viſit, may fill us with Wonder and Amazement, and make us ſay, *When the Lord returned again the Captivity of* our *Zion*, *we were like Men that dream.* But *his Ways are not as our Ways.* Glory to him, *he has ſeen our Ways, and is healing them.*--- It gave me much Pleaſure, to hear Mr. *Porteous*, and ſome of my People, giving ſuch an Account of the Work of GOD with you, at your *laſt Sacrament*.---Such of *my Flock* as attended that ſolemn Occaſion, I hope, have not loſt their travel--- About *ſeven and twenty* of them, all in a Company coming home, were, by a kind Providence overtaken upon the Road, by Mr. *Porteous*, Mrs. *Erſkine*, and Mr. *David Erſkine*,

Erſkine, who by the Bleſſing of the Lord, were made eminently uſeful to them. For ſuch was the Diſtreſs of many of them, that in all Appearance they had lodged in that deſert Place *all Night*, if the LORD by means of theſe Inſtruments, had not ſent them ſome Support and Relief; ſo much did their Soul-Diſtreſs affect their Bodies, that they ſeemed not able to travel much further. --- I doubt not but it will give you like Satisfaction, to be informed, that the ſame good Work upon Souls, is *daily advancing* and going on in this Pariſh. Every *Sabbath-Day*, ſince I wrote to you laſt, I may ſay, to the Glory of free Grace, has been a Day of the Son of Man. The Arrows of the almighty King are ſtill flying thick among us, and wounding the Hearts of his Enemies, and laying them down, groaning at the Feet of the Conqueror; crying under a Senſe of Guilt, and the frightful Apprehenſions of Wrath, and thirſting after a Saviour. --- For *many Months paſt*, I have obſerved, a general and unuſual Concern upon the whole Congregation; their cloſe Attendance upon Ordinances, tho' many of them be at a great Diſtance, their hungry-like Attention to the Word, the ſerious and concern'd like Airs appearing in their Faces. Many being ſo deeply affected in hearing, that frequently a *general Sound of Weeping*, thro' the *whole Congregation* uſes to riſe ſo high, that it much drowns my Voice: Their Carriage and ſpiritual Converſe in coming and going from publick Ordinances, and the many Prayers that are put up thro' this Pariſh --- Theſe good and promiſing Appearances, make me, thro' the Bleſſing of GOD upon his Ordinances, to expect yet greater Things than thoſe I have already ſeen. --- I told you in my laſt, what *Multitudes* of People attended our Evening-Exerciſe upon *Sabbath-Nights*. But now, tho' the Day be ſhort, I'm oblig'd to go to the *Kirk* with them, where almoſt the whole Congregation (which is very great) wait and attend. Many of them not regarding the Difficulty of travelling through a long dark Moor, under Night: And a good Number after they have heard a Lecture and two Sermons and the Evening-Exerciſe, ſtay and retire to the *School-Houſe*, and there ſpend ſome Hours in Prayer: and the LORD has ſignally owned them, not only to their own mutual Edification, but to the Conviction of By-ſtanders, and ſuch as have heard them without the Walls of the Houſe--Our *praying Societies* are in a moſt flouriſhing Condition, and

ſtill more Members flocking to them: their Meetings are frequent, and the LORD is obſervably preſent with them--- The *Meetings for Prayer* amongſt the *young Boys* and *Girls*, give me great Satisfaction, one whereof began ſoon after the Sacrament, and is now increaſed to about the Number of *twenty*. Till of late they met in the *Town*: But ſeveral of them falling under ſuch a deep Concern, that I was ſent for to ſpeak with them, where I found ſome of them all in Tears; Since that Time (that I may have them near me) I give them a Room in the *Manſe*, where they meet *every Night*. And O how pleaſant is it to hear the poor *young Lambs* addreſſing themſelves to GOD in Prayer. O with what Fervour, with what proper Expreſſions, do I hear them pouring out their Souls to a Prayer-hearing GOD; ſo that ſtanding at the back of the Door, I am often melted into Tears to hear them. --- We have another *praying Society* of *young Ones*, lately erected in another Corner of the Pariſh, where one Mr. *Robertſon* teaches one of the Charity Schools-- The *young Ones* of late, deſired his Allowance to meet in the *School-Houſe* for *Prayer*; which he very readily went in to (for its his great Pleaſure to promote and encourage Religion both in Young and Old) and there about *twenty* of them meet *twice every Week*, tho' they have a good Way (many of them) to travel in the Night-time.--- I may ſay in general, that ſuch a *praying Diſpoſition* as appears among this People, both *young* and *old*, was never ſeen nor heard of before; which gives me Ground to expect more of divine Influences, to come down amongſt us; for where the LORD prepares the Heart, he cauſes his Ear to hear --- As to the Pariſh of MADERTY, which you deſire to be inform'd about; ſoon after the Sacrament at *Fowels*, a neighbouring Pariſh, ſome *few Boys* met in the *Fields* for *Prayer*; and when obſerved were brought to an *Houſe*; to whom, many others, both *young* and *old* reſorted ſince, and are now according to my Information, in a very flouriſhing Condition. --- This *Preſbytery* is reſolved to divide themſelves into *Societies for Prayer*, for the *Progreſs* of *this bleſſed Work*, and to have frequent Meetings for this End.--- What *Perth Preſbytery* hath done, I have no certain Account, only, I heard what you ſeem to have been informed about.---I will accept of it, as a great Favour, to be allowed a frequent Correſpondence with you; that we may be mutually informed what the LORD is doing among

among us, and thereby be excited to more Diligence, in *Prayer* and *Praiſes*.---I'm afraid that my laſt Letter to you--wants that politeneſs and exactneſs, that's proper for a publick View; but if the publiſhing of it may contribute any Thing to the ſpreading of the REDEEMER's Praiſes, I allow you to make it a Part of your *Narrative*, tho' the doing of it may leave ſome Reflection upon me---I hope tho' otherwiſe unacquainted, we ſhall daily meet at the Throne of Grace in Prayer. That *this little Cloud*, that at firſt appeared but like a *Man's Hand* in the *Weſt* of *Scotland*, may ſpread over the *whole Land*, and ſend down a plentiful Rain to water the whole of the LORD's Inheritance among us.--That the Pleaſure of the LORD may, more and more proſper in your Hand, is the earneſt Prayer of

Your moſt affectionate Brother and
Servant in our deareſt Lord
William Haly.

HEre follow ATTESTATIONS given to *this Work*, by ſome Brethren, who having been for ſome Time here, [at *Kilſyth*] were Witneſſes to it, and had much Opportunity to converſe with ſeveral of every Sort who were the Subjects of it.

No. I. *From the Rev. Mr.* ROBERT SPEARS *Miniſter of the Goſpel at* LINLITHGOW, *to the Rev. Mr.* JAMES ROBE.

Rev. and dear Sir,

SInce my return from your *laſt Sacrament* at *Kilſyth*, and that in your neighbouring Pariſh of *Cumbernauld*, I cannot but ſay, that the Reflection on theſe delightful Seaſons of Communion with GOD, gives me a peculiar Joy and Satisfaction, and affords Matter of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to his holy Name.

That the ſo much talk'd of extraordinary Concern about Religion in your Pariſh, and in many other Places, is neither the Effect of *Mechaniſm* nor *Deluſion*, but of the *gracious Operation* of the Holy SPIRIT in *convincing* and *converting* Sinners to himſelf, has I think been proved. A ſufficient Evidence hereof has been laid before the World in your *Preface* and *Narratives*, the atteſted *Narratives* of the like gracious Work at *Cambuſlang*, and Mr. *Webſter*'s Letter to his

his Friend on the Subject--- I have ſeen alſo Mr. *Haly*'s Letters, giving Account of the merciful Viſit that GOD has made to *his Pariſh*.

That there is not only a great viſible outward Reformation of the Manners of your People; but a real happy Change, on the Temper of their Hearts, and their whole Converſation; and that *Multitudes* of once wicked Sinners, are now minding *the one Thing needful*, & are taught by the Grace of GOD *to live ſoberly righteouſly & godly in this preſent World*.

An *Evidence* of all this is contain'd in the above mentioned Papers, and the concurring *Teſtimony* of *many other worthy Miniſters* and *Chriſtians*; ſuch as is not to be born down by the Mockeries of the Prophane, nor the ſpightful Invectives of angry and prejudic'd Men----*To diſbelieve and ridicule ſuch an Evidence, is highly unreaſonable*; *nay, I think exceeding dangerous, as tending to weaken human Teſtimony and moral Evidence, if not to baniſh it from amongſt us*.

I do not therefore propoſe to enlarge on the Proofs of the extraordinary Diſpenſations of GOD's Grace in ſo many Places of this Church.---That I take to be needleſs, eſpecially from ſo obſcure and inconſiderable a Hand as mine.--- But as many for whom I am bound to have a tender Regard, have been deſirous to know my Apprehenſions concerning theſe ſpiritual Exerciſes in your Pariſh, and others around you.--- I readily embrace this Opportunity to declare, That *upon Trial and diligent Obſervation for ſeveral Days in* Cumbernauld *and your Pariſh*, I found *the good Report* concerning theſe People to be *ſtrictly & literally true*, only that *the one Half had not been told*, and that *the Reality exceeded all Deſcription*.

Oh! the *Seriouſneſs* and *Reverence*, the ſeeming *Devotion*, and *Engagedneſs* in the great Work they meet about, that appears in every Face in your publick Aſſemblies for divine Worſhip.--- It ſtruck me at firſt Sight, it is obvious to all: It cannot miſs to be helpful and quickning to the Miniſters that are to bring the Meſſage of GOD to them.--- *Some few* Perſons in the Audience, I obſerved *crying out* and *fainting* in the Congregation, when they heard the Word of GOD; and as often 'twas the Mercies as the Terrors of the Goſpel, at which they were moved. --- I know a great many Objections have been made againſt the Goodneſs of the Work on this Account.--- But beſides that there are a *far greater Number* of ſerious Souls againſt whom there's *no ſuch Objection*

jection.--- It is plain that thoſe others cannot help it. They have ſuch awful Views of eternal Things, particularly of the tremendous Evil of their Sins, and the Danger of an unconverted State, that it is like to overwhelm them. --- Nor need this ſeem ſtrange to ſuch as duly conſider what is ſaid of *a wounded Spirit*, and the Caſe of thoſe Penitents, *Act.* 2. 37. who when they heard the Charge brought againſt them of being the Murtherers of CHRIST, were *prick'd at the Heart*, and ſaid to the Apoſtles, *What ſhall we do.* And I think to hear a whole Multitude of *three Thouſand* ſaying this together, would amount to a *pretty loud Cry* ---This is generally underſtood to be an Accompliſhment of the Prophecy, Zech. 12. 10. That they *ſhould look on him whom they had pierced and mourn, as for a firſt-born.* And like, *the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Valley of Megiddon.* Which was certainly accompanied with *moſt bitter Lamentation*--- thro' the whole Land. And as for the other Sorrow to which the Grief of theſe Penitents is compared, to wit, *That for a Firſt-born*; All know it is ſo deep and ſo unfeigned, that Parents of the greateſt Courage & Reſolution have been made to *cry out* of it *moſt bitterly*---There is an Inſtance of *ſuch crying* for the Death of a Firſt-born, *Exod.* 11. 6. as never had a Parallel before, nor will the like be heard till the ſounding of the laſt Trumpet.--It hath been ſaid, That this cannot but create a Diſturbance to the Worſhip of GOD; I think it produces a *contrary* Effect. It is a Mean of engaging the Attention and Concern of their Fellow-worſhippers; and alſo of exciting a Reverence, Tenderneſs, and ſuch a deſirable Livelineſs of Affections in the Miniſters as is rather a Help than a Hinderance to them in their ſacred Miniſtrations. *So I found it to be* I can ſay for my ſelf. But there's no End of Objections; the moſt material have all been anſwered by *you*, Mr. *Webſter* and *others* who have wrote on the Subject. Theſe *ſeventeen Hundred Years* there has been a *cavilling Humour* againſt *every Fact* and *every Doctrine* of *Religion*; and tho' we are far from putting theſe Appearances of GOD in this Church on a Level with the Truth of Chriſtianity it ſelf, yet we may learn from the Bitterneſs with which this good Work has been oppoſed, not to wonder that a *cavilling Humour* ſhould ſtill prevail.

But Sir, you know, *I had particular Acceſs to converſe with Numbers* of theſe Perſons, who have been awakened to a Senſe of Religion, and particularly when you was privately examining,

mining, and admitting the Communicants. This gave me a ſpecial Opportunity, to learn ſome uſefulLeſſons from your great Tenderneſs, and Painfulneſs in thatMatter. And alſo, of receiving full Satisfaction from the People themſelves, as to the Nature of that good Work, that was carrying on in their Souls. And now, I can ſay, That ſo far as I am capable to judge from the *Word* of GOD, their ſpiritual Exerciſes were agreeable to the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Method of a Sinner's (I mean an adult Perſon's) *Converſion* and *Regeneration.*

In general, their *Convictions* anſwer the Deſcriptions of the ſick and ſenſible Sinners, whom CHRIST came to call to Repentance, *the weary and heavy laden whom he invites to come unto him for Reſt to their Souls.*

Indeed we know, there are various Meaſures and Degrees of *Conviction* in the Children of GOD: ſome may have been early, and habitually holy Perſons, and watchful againſt Sin, and who never had nor needed to have the Experience of ſuch deep Convictions and Awakenings as are needful in the bringing of many others from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of *Satan* unto GOD. Even in theſe too, who are thus converted in their advanced Years, there is an obſervable *Variety* in the holy Scriptures. *Such* I obſerved in thoſe happy Perſons I converſed with. It is too deep for us to pretend to aſcertain the *Proportions*, or give the *Reaſons* of GOD's Dealings in this Manner. He giveth no Account of his Matters. But without pretending to be wiſe above what is written; from the Converſation I had for ſeveralDays with theſe Perſons, comparing their Caſes with the *Word* of GOD; I may venture to obſerve, That *Convictions* may be *proportioned* as to the Meaſure and Continuance of them, in ſome, to the greatneſs of their Sins, and the wickedneſs of their former Lives; in others, to their Degrees of Knowledge about the Scheme of Salvation, and the Way of Relief by *Faith* in CHRIST JESUS; in others (which may be the laſt for aught we know in *younger Perſons* or *leſs enormouſly Wicked*) Convictions may be proportioned to ſome ſpecial Trials or Conflicts, or ſome other great Purpoſes that GOD deſigns them for in the Chriſtian Life. As we may argue, at leaſt by *Analogy* from theCaſe of theApoſtle *Paul*, concerning whom it has been remarked, that GOD laid his Foundation as low as the Gates of Hell, that he might raiſe a Superſtructure to the third Heavens. (*To be continued.*)